

NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION

Information Letter

FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

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CONTENTS

	Page		Page
American vitamin studies get publicity in England	1	Bulletins on berry culture.....	4
Board of Directors meets May 26.....	1	Supreme Court decisions on tax laws.....	4
Where investigation prevented error....	2	Merchandise warehouse in distribution..	4
Statistical bulletin on fruit and vegetable shipments and unloads	2	Transit provisions not retroactive.....	5
"Certain horrific myths"	2	Ruling on losses on inherited property...	5
Predict heavy freight traffic.....	3	Price trends in April.....	5
Interstate Commerce Commission decisions	3	New map of Alaska.....	6
		Salt deliveries should be tested for purity	6
		Order issued against grocers association	7

American Vitamin Studies Get Publicity in England

Vitamin studies in the United States are attracting attention in England, as is evidenced by the publication in a British medical journal of Dr. Walter H. Eddy's paper on the influence of cooking and canning on vitamin content, given before the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association. The British publication—Medical Officer—is a journal for medical men in the government and municipal service.

The publication of Dr. Eddy's article is especially opportune, for at about the same time The Grocer, a London trade journal, printed an address by Mr. F. C. Dyche-Teague before the Wholesale Distributors Association, in which he stated regarding heat sterilization: "Even where it can be applied it also results in the destruction of the vitamins, those necessary food substances whose presence is so essential to our bodies' well-being."

The idea that vitamins are largely destroyed by cooking originated from early work on vitamins in England. It is hard to overtake a wrong idea once it gets a start, but it is encouraging that the recent work in the United States, which has disproved these erroneous views regarding the effect of canning on vitamin content, is being brought before the medical profession in England.

Board of Directors Meets May 26

The Spring meeting of the Board of Directors of the N. C. A. will be held on Tuesday, May 26. Besides the directors there will be in attendance the presidents of a large number of state canners associations and the chairmen of the various sections of the National Canners Association. The meeting has a number of important matters up for consideration, and there promises to be an exceptionally good attendance.

Where Investigation Prevented Error

An investigation recently concluded by the National Canners Association furnishes an illustration of how easily "ptomaine poisoning" stories can gain circulation, although in this case the newspapers refrained from printing the current gossip.

The proprietor of a restaurant died after a brief and acute illness and it was currently reported that his death was due to "ptomaine poisoning" from eating canned tomatoes. A friend of the canning industry who heard these reports pointed out to the newspapers the injustice they might do to the industry by publishing these rumors without a thorough investigation, and no mention of ptomaine was made in the papers.

The National Canners Association was asked to make an investigation, and the result was the same as in most other cases of this character. The man had been ill for a period of two years with arteriosclerosis and death was immediately due to a cerebral hemorrhage.

The man's wife, as well as his physician, characterized as ridiculous the story that canned foods were in any way connected with the case.

Statistical Bulletin on Fruit and Vegetable Shipments and Unloads

The Department of Agriculture has issued as Statistical Bulletin No. 7 a pamphlet of 112 pages giving figures on the shipments and unloads of nine important fruits and vegetables in twelve large markets during the years 1918-1923. Carlot shipments and unloads are shown by states of origin, and carlot unloads by cities. Copies of the bulletin can be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, at 15 cents each.

"Certain Horrific Myths"

In a few sentences, a writer in the Better Homes Bureau section of a Boston newspaper has effectively disposed of what he characterizes as "horrific myths" concerning canned foods. The article says:

"We were amazed the other day when talking with a very intelligent group of women to find that certain horrific myths belonging to the pure food laws period were still giving them nightmares concerning canned goods.

"Hospitals are giving canned tomatoes instead of oranges where economy is necessary, with fine results; sterilizing in the can to prevent spoilage (just self-interest on the canners' part) insures safety from disease germs or other dangers. Fresh foods, particularly those eaten raw, may carry dangerous dirt—nothing is perfectly fool proof—but there is no safer food known probably, than the best brands of canned foods. And they mean the vegetables and fruits you need, at all seasons, with no work or refuse. Give them a place—the big place they earn—particularly at this time of year, in your menus. We are not grinding an axe for the canner, but speaking for your best interests, all points considered."

Member canners may find opportunity to pass these paragraphs on to their local papers. They are certainly worthy of wide circulation.

Predict Heavy Freight Traffic

Loading of revenue freight during the week of May 9 totaled 981,370 cars, considerably in excess of any corresponding week in any previous year, according to reports filed with the American Railway Association. This was an increase of 73,167 cars over the corresponding week last year and 6,629 cars in excess of the corresponding week in 1923. It also exceeded by a considerable margin the corresponding weeks of 1920, 1921 and 1922.

From information now available, railroad freight traffic during 1925 on the basis of the number of cars loaded with revenue freight, will equal, if not exceed, that of previous years, according to an estimate submitted at the spring meeting of the American Railway Association. Total loading of revenue freight for the year, it is estimated, will approximate 50,494,570 cars, an increase of about 682,450 cars or 1.4 per cent over 1923, when more cars were loaded than ever before for any similar period. It is also expected that the total for 1925, according to the present business outlook, will exceed 1924 by about 1,976,350 cars or 4.1 per cent.

Interstate Commerce Commission Decisions

The Interstate Commerce Commission has found unreasonable the less-than-carload ratings applied under southern and western classifications to certain types of portable pea hullers shipped from Tennessee and has ordered the establishment of new rates by July 15. In the same case the rates on other types of hullers were also attacked, but these the Commission found reasonable.

The rates on canned goods, in carloads, from Haywood and Leandro, California, to Oakland, California, for reshipment by water to interstate destinations, are reasonable, according to a finding of the Interstate Commerce Commission, which has accordingly dismissed a complaint filed with the Commission against the rates.

Bulletins on Berry Culture

Two illustrated bulletins—one dealing with gooseberries and currants, and the other with blackberries, raspberries and dewberries—have just been issued by the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo. They contain recommendations for the culture of these fruits, based upon recent work of the Experiment Station, with particular reference to soil and other conditions in Missouri. Insect pests and diseases, with recommendations for their control, are discussed. Copies of the bulletins—No. 231 on blackberries, raspberries and dewberries, and No. 232 on gooseberries and currants—can be obtained by writing to the Experiment Station at Columbia.

Supreme Court Decisions on Tax Laws

In a recent decision the U. S. Supreme Court has held that no deductible loss is sustained under the provisions of the Revenue Act of 1918 where property purchased prior to March 1, 1913, is sold thereafter for more than cost but less than the March 1, 1913, value.

In another decision the Supreme Court held that under the provisions of Sections 64 (a) and 64 (b) of the Bankruptcy Act a claim for federal taxes takes priority in payment over labor wage claims where the assets of the estate are insufficient to pay all claims in full.

Merchandise Warehouse in Distribution

A study of the services and best practices in present-day merchandise warehouse distribution has just been issued by the Department of Commerce in the form of a 33-page pamphlet. While most of the important warehouse services are touched upon, the pamphlet deals primarily with the central storage distributing warehouse from the point of view of better transportation in supplying public needs, reduction of loss and damage claims, lower transportation charges by redistribution in L. C. L. lots from a central point, etc.

Copies of the pamphlet, which is the first of a series that the Department of Commerce plans to issue on warehousing and distribution, can be obtained from the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, in Washington, or from its branch offices in various cities. It is sold by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, for 10 cents per copy.

Transit Provisions Not Retroactive

The Interstate Commerce Commission has adopted the following conference ruling:

Under section 6 of the interstate commerce act any provision for transit must be made by tariff. Such provisions are deemed to apply properly only to shipments which originate while the provisions are in effect, and no new or amended transit provision is to be made applicable by tariff to shipments which originated before the effective date of that tariff.

Ruling on Losses on Inherited Property

According to a recent decision of the U. S. Board of Tax Appeals a taxpayer who acquires property by virtue of the last will and testament of a deceased testator, free and clear from any restrictions or qualifications, and thereafter sells one parcel of such property for an amount less than its appraised value realizes a loss sustained from the sale or other disposition of the property as defined in section 202 (a) (3), and the amount of such loss is a deduction from gross income under the provisions of section 214 (a) (5) of the Revenue Act of 1921.

Price Trends in April

A sharp decline in the general level of wholesale prices is shown for April by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Bureau's weighted index number, which includes 404 commodities or price series, dropped to 156.2 for April compared with 161.0 for the preceding month, a fall of 3 per cent. Among farm products there were pronounced price decreases in grains, hogs, sheep, eggs, potatoes, tobacco, and wool, with smaller decreases in cattle, cotton, and hides. Foods also were lower, with declines in butter, cheese, coffee, lard, rye and wheat flour, corn meal, salt and sugar.

The retail food index issued by the same Bureau shows that there was a decrease of about two-tenths of 1 per cent in the retail cost of food in April, as compared with March. The index number was 151.1 in March and 150.8 in April.

New Map of Alaska

A new base map of Alaska has just been issued by the Geological Survey of the Department of the Interior, printed in black and blue on a scale of about 80 miles to 1 inch. This map has been brought up to date by the inclusion of numerous additions and corrections to the earlier editions, as the result of field surveys that have been made during the last few years. The map is sold by the Geological Survey at 10 cents per copy.

Salt Deliveries Should Be Tested for Purity

It is pointed out in the Association's Bulletin No. 20-L that calcium compounds in brine used for canning peas and shelled beans have the effect of toughening these two products to some extent. The result is the same whether the calcium compounds result from the use of hard water or of salt which has not been sufficiently purified. It has been found that to obtain the best results, the brine added to the can should have a hardness of less than 200 parts per million.

It is also pointed out that a brine containing 17 pounds of salt per 100 gallons, made from water containing no calcium or magnesium and salt containing 0.3 per cent of calcium (equivalent to 0.75 per cent of calcium carbonate) has a hardness of 150 parts per million.

In view of the fact that the water used by most canners contains more or less calcium, it is important that canners of peas and shelled beans use a salt of as pure a grade as can be economically secured. From the samples submitted to the Laboratory this year, it appears that all canners should now be able to secure salt containing not more than 0.2 per cent of calcium. Many will be able to secure a salt with less than 0.1 per cent of calcium.

As far as practicable, it is suggested that canners purchase their salt under a written contract regarding the maximum amount of calcium which deliveries shall contain. It is not sufficient to depend on published analyses, or on the analyses of samples submitted by the manufacturer. Agreements regarding this matter should be based on the composition of salt delivered to the canner. It is suggested that members, on receipt of deliveries of salt intended for use with peas, shelled beans, or beets, send samples of about three ounces to the Research Laboratory for analysis, in order to determine whether the salt actually received meets their requirements.

It is only with a few products that the small amounts of calcium likely to be present in the salt delivered to canners is

material. This applies, as far as we know, only to peas and shelled beans and to beets. The latter product is not toughened by the presence of calcium in the brine, but is sometimes coated with a white incrustation of calcium oxalate resulting from the combination of oxalic acid natural to the beets and calcium from the brine.

Order Issued Against Grocers Association

The Missouri-Kansas Wholesale Grocers Association, whose principal office is in Kansas City, Mo., are required in an order issued by the Federal Trade Commission to discontinue certain business practices found to be unfair methods of competition. The Association is composed of wholesale grocers in the western half of Missouri and throughout Kansas. The retail grocers with whom they do business are located in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Arkansas, Iowa and Nebraska.

According to the findings of the Commission, one of the purposes of the Association was to deal collectively with the competition involved in manufacturers who sell direct to retailers and at the same time to wholesale grocers. Immediately after the adoption of a policy of direct sales to retailers by a large manufacturer, numerous bulletins were issued by the Association's secretary in which its members were encouraged to discontinue handling this manufacturer's products and were urged to push the sale of competing commodities. This act, and others of the Association, the findings state, constitute a conspiracy and combination on the part of concerns normally competitive with each other to confine the interstate business of the manufacturer concerned to the channels of distribution considered proper by the respondent association. Further effect was to hamper and obstruct the business of jobbing competitors who were disposed to handle or did handle this manufacturer's products.

"India as a Market for American Goods" is the title of a 50-page bulletin just issued by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce as Trade Information Bulletin No. 348.

By a Danish decree of April 1, 1925, tomato sauce when imported into Denmark by canning factories for the production of canned fish may now be imported free of duty under certain regulations.

